market consideration effective from 1.4.98 for all petroleum products other than MS, SKO(PDS), LPG, HSD and ATF. Prices of HSD is fixed on import parity basis and the benefit of decline in international prices has been passed on to the Indian consumers.

Smooth functioning of Bombay High

*359. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Asian Age, dated the 2nd October, 1998, captioned 'Minister ignores P.M.'s order';

(b) if so, the facts of the case; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure smooth functioning of Bombay High?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) On the recommendations of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on 15th December, 1997, the Ministry of Civil Aviation granted permission to ONGC to hire three Bell—412 helicopters from M/s. Azal for providing helicopter services for carriage of men and material related to the Bombay High offshore operations under foreign registration initially for a period of three months with the condition that the helicopters would be got registered in India and operated in conformity with the domestic air transport policy. On the request of ONGC, permission was extended from time to time till 1st September, 1998.

In the mean time M/s. Azal India Pvt. Ltd. (an Indian company) was granted NOC on 6th November, 1998 to operate non-scheduled air services. Import permission for three Bell-412 HP (2+13 seater) helicopters was issued on 1st December, 1998.

(c) In order to meet its operational requirements for offshore activities, ONGC hires helicopter services from various vendors like M/s Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd. (PHHL) and other Indian operators M/s. Azal India Pvt. Ltd has also started flying with effect from 1.1.1999. M/s. PHHL and other Indian registered helicopter operators are fully equipped to provide necessary services to ONGC.

Report on Radioactive Pollution at Jaduguda

*360. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether prevalence of disease caused by Radioactive pollution at Jaduguda by uranium mines owned by Uranium Corporation of India Ltd. has been brought to the notice of Central Government by the Government of Bihar; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) No, Sir. However, a copy of the report of a Committee of the Bihar State Legislative Council on the alleged radioactive pollution at Jaduguda on account of the operations of the Uranium Corporation of India Ltd. (UCIL), a public sector undertaking under the administrative control of the Department of Atomic Energy, was made available by the Secretary of the said Council to the management of UCIL.

(b) After a visit to Jaduguda, discussions with the local officers of UCIL as well as discussions with/reports of the officers concerned of the State Government, including State Government doctors and the State Director General of Health Services and others, the

Committee stated inter alia in its report that it could not come to any conclusion as to whether there was actually any problem due to radioactivity or not, for want of examination of the issues by specialists in effects of radioactivity. In its report, this Committee recommended inter alia that a detailed survey be carried out by the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in respect of the effects of the uranium mines at Jaduguda in the surrounding areas. Accordingly, a team consisting of radiation experts of the Health Physics Unit of the BARC at Jaduguda and medical officers of the State Government as well as UCIL Hospital carried out a door-to-door survey of 17 villages around Jaduguda and examined about 4000 persons. This initial survey was followed by detailed pathological and other tests of selected persons at the UCIL Hospital and Tata Main Hospital, Jamshedpur. This team finally shortlisted 29 cases and felt that further examination by Radiation Experts of BARC was required to assess if these cases could be attributed to effects of radiation. An expert team of Medical Officers and Health Physicists of BARC visited Jaduguda and alongwith Doctors of the State Government, UCIL Hospital and Tata Main Hospital re-examined the shortlisted cases. As per the findings of this team of Experts, the disease pattern cannot be ascribed to radiation exposure in any of these cases.

कृषि ऋण हेतु निर्धारित किया गया लक्ष्य

2636. **श्री ओंकार सिंह लखावत:** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) भारत सरकार ने वर्ष 1997-98 व 1998-99 में किसानों को कृषि ऋण उपलब्ध कराने के लिए क्या लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया था और किसानों को वस्तुत: कितना कृषि ऋण उपलब्ध कराया गया; और

(ख) सरकार ने नौवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना में कुल कितना कृषि ऋण उपलब्ध कराने का लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया है और पंचवर्षीय योजनावधि के शेष वर्षों में राजस्थान के किसानों को कुल कितना कृषि ऋण उपलब्ध कराने का लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया गया है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोमपाल): (क) और (ख) कृषि ऋण तथा सहकारिता संबंधी कार्यकारी दल द्वारा नौवीं योजनावधि के लिए लगाए गए अनुमान के अनुसार किसानों को प्रदान किए जाने वाले प्रस्तावित कुल कृषि ऋण लगभग 229750 करोड़ रुपये होने का अनुमान है। वर्ष 1997-98 और 1998-99 के दौरान किसानों को प्रदान किए गए ऋण और उनके लिए निर्धारित लक्ष्य निम्नानुसार है:—

(करोड़ रुपये)

वर्ष	लक्ष्य	प्रदान किए गए ऋण
1997-98	33,375	31,696.41 (अनंतिम)
1998-99	38,645	38,054.70 (अनुमानित)

ऋण मुहैया कराने के लिए राज्यवार लक्ष्यों का निर्धारण योजना आयोग द्वारा वर्षानुवर्ष आधार पर किया जाता है। नाबार्ड ने राजस्थान के लिए वर्ष 1997-98 से 2001-2002 (नौवीं योजना अवधि) तक की अवधि के लिए क्षमता से जुड़ी योजना पर आधारित कृषि ऋण की अनुमानित आवश्यकता 13,862.40 करोड़ रुपये आंकी है।

कृषि में विविध खेती

2637. **श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र:** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि खेती की विविधता दिनों-दिन नष्ट होती जा रही है और चावल व गेहूं की कई किस्में लुप्त होती जा रही हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो लुप्त हुई किस्मों का ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(ग) क्या यह भी सच है कि गढ़वाल के पर्वतीय क्षेत्र में प्रचलित "बारहा नाजा" परम्परा को हतोत्साहित किया जा रहा है?

कृषि मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सोमपाल): (क) जी हां, यह सही है कि भारतीय कृषि में विविधता धीरे-धीरे घट रही है, क्योंकि चावल और गेहूं की विभिन्न देशी किस्मों/स्थानीयों प्रजातियों के स्थान पर अधिक उपज देने वाली किस्मों का उपयोग किया जा रहा है।